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Sent: Monday, September 28, 2020 4:39 PM
To: Tavlarides, Mark <mtavlarides@bgrdc.com>
Subject: Azerbaijan Update

Good afternoon,

I wanted to bring to your attention a press release from the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the recent attacks by Armenia on Azerbaijani civilians. It can be found [here](#).

Since yesterday, September 27, Armenia has launched a large-scale provocation against Azerbaijan, targeting residential areas and the armed forces of Azerbaijan. As a result of massive shelling of Azerbaijani villages, 8 civilians were killed and many more injured. The Azerbaijani Army, using the right of self-defense and in order to protect civilians, reacted through counter-offensive measures.

Azerbaijan's operations are conducted within its internationally recognized sovereign territories, and Azerbaijan is abiding by its commitments under international humanitarian law. Azerbaijan has long expressed warnings that it expects larger military provocations by Armenia at any time. Open provocations by the Armenian leadership, especially by Prime Minister Pashinyan; recent intensified reconnaissance; and sabotage activities by Armenia, including using tactical drones against Azerbaijani positions, demonstrate that Armenia was preparing to launch another attack.

Armenia has violated all the norms and principles of international law by occupying internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan, which was condemned by four UN Security Council Resolutions. Against this background, please see attached for relevant information on the latest developments, including the list of Armenian provocations for the last 2 years.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,
Mark

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September 28, 2020

Armenia kills Azerbaijani civilians, including children, initiates another military escalation

On September 27, 2020 the armed forces of Armenia illegally stationed on Azerbaijan's occupied territories once again blatantly violated the ceasefire regime and launched a massive artillery attack targeting residential areas, as well as the armed forces of Azerbaijan along the line of contact.¹

As a result of the intensive shelling of Azerbaijani villages, 8 civilians were killed and many more injured. Extensive damage has been inflicted on houses and civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, medical centers, school buildings, kindergartens.² Regretfully, just in one shelling of a house in Naftalan region of Azerbaijan five members of the same family, including children, were killed by Armenian forces.³ Moreover, continuing intensive fire of Tartar region on September 28, killed 2 brothers living in Tartar region. These atrocities of Armenia are in blatant violation of its commitments under the Geneva Conventions, and basic norms and principles of international humanitarian law.

Azerbaijani army does not target the civilian population, civilian facilities, and civilian infrastructure. While, the Armenian army deliberately places its firing points inside and near the human settlements, Azerbaijani Army made official calls on the civilian Armenian population in the occupied territories to stay away from military facilities.⁴

The latest provocation by Armenia follows the 12-14 July attacks against Azerbaijan across the international border in the Tovuz region, when Azerbaijan lost over a dozen of military servicemen, including one major-general, and a 76-year-old civilian.⁵

The ongoing large-scale deliveries of weapons from Russia⁶ have intensified over the last several months indicating at a clear preparation for war. Similarly, mounting bellicose statements and provocations (list is enclosed) of Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan and Defense Minister Tonoyan, who clearly rejected current peace process and called for occupation of more territories and increase of offensive capabilities,⁷ have dealt a significant blow to the negotiations co-chaired by France, Russia and the United States.

It is critically important to understand that all the fighting is taking place within the internationally recognized sovereign territories of Azerbaijan illegally occupied by Armenia's armed forces in violation of the relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions.⁸ Unlike Armenia, which launched cross-border attacks in July, Azerbaijan has no military objectives on the territory of the Republic of Armenia. Azerbaijan has always supported substantive and result-oriented negotiations to ensure prosperous future for both Azerbaijan and Armenia. It is the moment to strongly support and respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan, which is also important in bilateral relations and future cooperation between Azerbaijan and the United States.

The U.S. Congress should make clear to Armenia that its illegal occupation of Azerbaijan's territories is neither sustainable, nor acceptable. Just and lasting peace should prevail in the South Caucasus region.

ENCLOSURE: 4 pages

¹ <https://mfa.gov.az/en/news/6876/view>; <https://mod.gov.az/en/news/armenian-armed-forces-committed-large-scale-provocations-along-the-entire-length-of-the-front-32311.html>

² <https://photo.azertag.az/post/-qurbanovlar-ailesi-ermenitexribatinin-qurbani-oldu-aile-uzvlerinden-ikisi-mektebli-idi--dunya-ermenifasizmini-gorsun-foto--22842>; <https://photo.azertag.az/post/ermenistanin-dinc-ehaliye-xain-hucumlari-terterlileri-qorxutmur--azertacin-terterden-fotoreportaji-22830>; <https://photo.azertag.az/post/ermenistan-fasizminin-eybecer-sifeti-dusmen-mulki-sexsleri-hedefe-almaqda-davam-edir-%E2%80%93azertac-hadise-yerinden-xeber-verir--22836>

³ <https://mfa.gov.az/en/news/6882/view>; <https://apa.az/en/nagorno-garabagh/Five-members-of-a-family-killed-as-a-result-of-Armenian-shelling-coloredOFFICIALcolor-331354>

⁴ <https://mod.gov.az/en/news/azerbaijan-army-does-not-shell-civilians-32324.html>

⁵ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-53402476>

⁶ <https://eurasianet.org/aliyev-airs-grievances-to-putin-over-arms-shipments-to-armenia>

⁷ <https://www.lragir.am/en/2019/03/30/71511>

⁸ <https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/eur/rls/or/13508.htm>

**Armenia's provocative actions since Nikol Pashinyan
has become the Prime Minister of Armenia on May 8, 2018**

Date	Action
8 May 2018	In his address to Armenia's National Assembly, prior to his election as PM, N.Pashinyan raised the issue of participation of the illegal regime established in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan as a party to the negotiations. Thus, he has started questioning the format of negotiations and has been doing so on numerous occasions.
9 May 2018	On the next day of the election, together with his wife, N.Pashinyan visited the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. In Khankendi, he participated in celebration of occupation of the Azerbaijani city of Shusha, discussed the issue of improving of the mechanism of "restraint of the enemy" and opened the "Armenian Dram Museum" in Shusha.
16 June 2018	N.Pashinyan visited again the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, inspected positions of the armed forces of Armenia in the eastern part of the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region and held military consultations with illegal regime "officials".
9 July 2018	N.Pashinyan sent his son to undergo military service in the units of armed forces of Armenia deployed in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. He said that this gesture had been intended to encourage more Armenians to be enlisted in the army.
8 Sept. 2018	In meeting with the Russian-Armenian businessmen in Moscow, N.Pashinyan openly said that "he perceived Artsakh as part of Armenia in the future".
27 February 2019	Armenia's National Security Service Director Artur Vanetsyan at a press conference in the occupied Khankendi city said: "The program that we call a resettlement program, in my and everyone's assessment will be the main guarantee of our country's security. Because there are those speeches, those expressions, and those people who always manipulate this subject as if the lands will be returned, will be negotiated, conceded, etc. As a result of that program, we will send a clear message to all our people and the world that we have no intention to give up an inch of land; on the contrary, our compatriots must settle on those lands and build our country."
12 March 2019	N.Pashinyan visited the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and in Khankendi city of Azerbaijan, held joint meeting of the Security Councils of Armenia and the illegal regime created by Armenia in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.
30 March 2019	In a meeting with the Armenian community in New York the Armenian Minister of Defense Davit Tonoyan stated that a "territories for peace"

	approach will no longer be applied. "As the minister of defense, I announce that this format, territories for peace, I have re-phrased it. We are doing the opposite – a new war for new territories," Tonoyan said. He also said that Armenia will increase the number of its strike units.
9 May 2019	N.Pashinyan visited the occupied territories of Azerbaijan where he took part in the celebrations of occupation of Shusha city.
30 May 2019	Armenia grossly violated the ceasefire regime on the front line. At a time when the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group paid a visit to Azerbaijan, on May 30 in the morning, a major of the Azerbaijan Army Mr. Agil Omarov was shot and killed by a sniper of the armed forces of Armenia in the direction of the Aghdam district.
10 June 2019	Minister of Defence D.Tonoyan confirmed that he had personally ordered the killing of an Azerbaijani soldier in the direction of Tartar district of the front line and publicly awarded the murder of an Azerbaijani soldier.
5 August 2019	Ahead of the start of the Pan-Armenian Games, N.Pashinyan declared that "Artsakh is Armenia. Period." and the crowd chanted "Miatsum" (<i>Unification</i>).
6-17 August 2019	Armenia held pan-Armenian Games, for the first time, in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.
9 August 2019	Armenia announced another 4-year project aimed at changing infrastructure of the Sarsang Water Reservoir. Also, the Armenian side announced construction of the third highway to connect Armenia with the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. These infrastructural changes, which are in violation of international law and Azerbaijani legislation, aim at consolidation of occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan.
24 Sept. – 5 October 2019	Armenian armed forces held large-scale military exercises entitled "The expansion of the Armed Forces: Combating the adversary's aggression" in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan
23 December 2019	Joint session of the Security Councils of Armenia and the illegal regime established by Armenia in the occupied territories was held in Yerevan co-chaired by Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan and "President" of the illegal regime Arayik Harutyunyan.
31 March 2020	Armenia held illegal "parliamentary" and "presidential" elections in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.
21 April 2020	Commenting the remarks by Russia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, S.Lavrov, on "liberation of a number of areas around Nagorno-Karabakh and the

	unlocking of transport, economic and other communications”, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Zohrab Mnatsakanyan said: “There have not been and will not be any concessions. The Armenian sides will never exercise that approach”.
23 April 2020	Armenia’s MFA declared that proposal for a peaceful settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, envisaging a step-by-step approach, is not acceptable.
26 June 2020	Armed forces of Armenia, with the participation of the Chief of Staff Onik Gasparyan, held military exercises in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.
10 July 2020	Armenia adopted a revised National Security Strategy, which defined that the goal of the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno Karabakh conflict was to consolidate the outcomes of the war launched by Armenia against Azerbaijan.
12-16 July 2020	Armenia attacked the positions of Azerbaijan at the Armenia-Azerbaijan international border, in the direction of the Tovuz district. 12 servicemen of Azerbaijan and one civilian were killed.
23 July 2020	N.Pashinyan declared that after the July clashes the Armenian position on the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno Karabakh conflict has been strengthened and he put forward 7 conditions, stipulating, inter alia, the following: the system of security of Armenia and the illegal regime “to be strengthened, the illegal regime “must become the full-fledged party to negotiations”, international monitoring of the cease-fire regime must be strengthened, and etc.
4 August 2020	After the devastating explosion in Beirut, Armenia announced its plan to implant Lebanese Armenians to the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. According to the Armenian mass media, several Armenians from Lebanon have already settled in the occupied territories, including in Shusha. Thus, Armenia intensified its illegal settlement policy in 2020.
11 August 2020	The illegal regime announced its intention of transferring “key administrative offices” to the occupied Shusha city.
17 August 2020	The illegal regime threatened to strike Azerbaijani city of Ganja.
26 August 2020	The Armenian Defense Ministry announced the plan to create a nationwide militia that would reinforce Armenia’s armed forces and could be deployed at “endangered sections” of Armenia’s borders or “line of contact with the adversary”.
28 August 2020	N.Pashinyan held the ceremony to award Armenian servicemen who conducted military operation against Azerbaijan on July 12-16, 2020. In his

	speech, he again praised Armenian terrorists, such as Monte Melkonian, for their deeds against Azerbaijani civilians in the course of military operations in early 1990s.
25-31 August 2020	Anna Hakobyan, the wife of Armenia's Prime Minister, together with other women participated in combat and shooting training courses in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Videos and photos of the training were widely distributed in media.
29 August 2020	N.Pashinyan visited the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. He awarded servicemen who took part in the military aggression against Azerbaijan both in early 1990s and in July 2020.
21 Sept. 2020	N.Pashinyan issued a message to the nation on 29 th anniversary of Armenia's independence. 2 nd line of the message reads " <i>To the proud citizens of the Artsakh Republic!</i> " [i.e. Karabakh].